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Essays in Social Justice. By THOMAS NIXON CARVER. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press. 1915. Pp. vi, 429. \$2.00.)

The Abolition of Poverty. By JACOB H. HOLLANDER. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 1914. Pp. 122. \$0.75.)

It is a sign of the fundamental soundness of a nation's intellectual organization when its leaders in fields of specialized thought turn in their maturity to the discussion of the more general problems of life. It is a reassertion on the part of the specialist of his humanity, long suppressed under his special vocation. Thus the German chemist or physicist permits himself in the end to become cosmogonist; the psychologist becomes metaphysician; the economist undertakes the role of political or ethical philosopher. Perhaps it is impertinent to appraise the objective value of the resulting contributions to metaphysics, politics, and ethics. So much, however, must be granted: these specialists, wandering in broader fields, bring with them personal interpretations that are fresh, as well as a mental cast shaped by their professional experience. Professor Carver and Professor Hollander, succumbing in the works under review to the enticement of the horizon, may not be contributing what would pass for the highest grade of ethics or social philosophy, but they may be contributing something more useful to those disciplines: a wealth of suggestion.

As any one familiar with Professor Carver's earlier work might surmise, the keynotes of his theory of social justice are survival value and a robust, practical, joyless individualism. What is social justice? Be sure you do not address your inquiry to your own soul, as the false philosophers of old were in the habit of doing. "The study must be objective, rather than subjective, that is, we must study the laws of economics and social development, rather than our own sentiments" (p. 11). That is justice which is conducive to group survival. "In the most general terms, therefore, justice may be defined as such an adjustment of the conflicting interests of the citizens of a nation as will interfere least with, and contribute most to, the strength of the nation" (p. 9). Thus, you see, there is no conflict between morals and expediency. The good and the successful are one. "The good *are* they with whom it is well in the long run and the bad are they with whom it is ill in the long run" (p. 23).

Our so-called moral sentiments to the contrary notwithstanding, there is no such thing as morality not conditioned and chiefly

determined by circumstances. In our green college days, many of us felt that the Persians, whose pride was to speak the truth and to acquit themselves manfully, were superior morally to the Greeks, sons of Odysseus, masters of the arts of lying and trickery, valiant in the pursuit of fleeing foes or in the sacking of defenseless towns, but otherwise prudent. Today the Persians are only a myth, their name borrowed by later and inferior stocks, while the Greeks still survive, their descent from Odysseus excellently authenticated by their modern conduct. Wiles, it may be said, were necessary for their survival under the oppression of Macedonia, Rome, Turkey, and latterly of the Entente. They were therefore moral, according to Professor Carver's principles. But one can be pure relativist in theory; the absolutist will still crop up in one's heart. "Deception is always immoral" (p. 91). This is not the only lapse of Professor Carver into absolutism. To sacrifice one part of a population in the interest of another is "inherently inequitable" (p. 140). "Oppression is always hateful" (p. 135). It is, however, unfair to hold Professor Carver too strictly to account for failing to be rigorously consistent with his fundamental principle of survival value. So far as the reviewer knows, no writer on ethics has worked out a perfect reconciliation between the claims of morality as a sentimental matter, without which no man would live or die for his group, and morality as an adjustment to the requirements of survival, without which no group could long persist.

The practical essays in which Professor Carver illustrates his principles cover a wide range. There is an essay which attempts to translate the concept of self interest into the concept "self centered appreciation," which may be commended to the psychologists; an essay on "Forms of human conflict" which arranges forms of conflict in higher and lower classes (on rather absolutistic principles), one surmises, written chiefly for the sake of later treating socialism as an attempt to substitute the lower form of political competition for the higher form of economic competition. Under universal public ownership all positions, Professor Carver solemnly asserts, would be filled by methods of political campaigning (p. 125)—obviously a most archaic mode of conflict. There are interesting chapters on "How ought wealth to be distributed"? (answer, very much as it is now) and "How much is a man worth?" (answer, precious little). "Socialism and the present unrest" is a collection of hard nuts for the parlor socialist to crack. "The

single tax" is remarkable for its cold impartiality as between single taxers and land monopolists: the latter are holding what they have no special right to hold; the former are yearning for a participation in benefits to which they have no claim. Perhaps the most ingenious essay of the collection is the one entitled "The question of inheritance." Here we are given one of those broad classifications of society in which the political essayists delight. Men are either family builders or spawners. Whether a society is good for anything or not depends on the proportions of family builders and spawners. Inheritance obviously works in favor of the family builder and insures his survival and multiplication on the earth. It should therefore be regarded as socially just. This does not mean, however, that swollen inheritances, adapted to create an idle and profligate leisure class, should be permitted.

As to poverty, Professor Carver believes that it is a condition no more inherently necessary than yellow fever or malaria. His method for reducing its volume and ultimately extirpating it is derived from the ordinary economic principles of imputation. Improve the methods of distributing labor; train laborers better for their work; check excessive multiplication. Thus the economic value of labor will be increased and poverty will disappear.

Professor Hollander approaches the problem of poverty from another angle. In his view wages are low because of the inferior bargaining power of labor. Increase the laborer's bargaining power, through unionism, or enlist the state in the laborer's interest, through minimum wage laws, and it will be possible to make rapid progress toward the elimination of poverty. Not a word in Professor Hollander's book about the laws of imputation, the effects of quantitative disproportion of the factors in production. Not a word in Professor Carver's book about the superior bargaining power of the man with cash in his dealings with the man with bare hands. Yet both authorities are deeply imbued with the classical tradition, in which both factors in the problem of poverty are intermingled. The explanation of this fact is simple: each of the works was written under the drive of the author's temperament. Professor Carver's is more concerned with the mechanical adjustment of quantitative forces; Professor Hollander's, with the conditions of social economic conflict. We who are under no present necessity of seeing a complex problem as simple will content ourselves with the middle ground. Poverty

will never be eliminated by pure economic law nor by positive law that knows only the methods of economic law. Nor will it ever be eliminated by legislative fiat, inspired by abstract ideas of social justice and oblivious of limitations imposed by economic fact.

ALVIN S. JOHNSON.

Russian Sociology. A Contribution to the History of Sociological Thought and Theory. By JULIUS HECKER. Columbia University Studies in History, Economics and Public Law, Vol. LXVII, No. 1. (New York: Longmans, Green and Company. 1915. Pp. 309. \$2.50.)

Among the benefits of the present war is that it has revealed Russian thought and life more fully to English-speaking peoples. A timely volume in this connection is Dr. Hecker's study of Russian sociology. We may know something of Russian music and literature in America, but it is doubtful whether we know much about Russian sociology and economics. We are, to be sure, familiar with the writings of Kropotkin in English and of the two Russian sociologists who wrote in French, Novicow and De Roberty. Most of us have also heard of, and know something about, Bakunin and the nihilistic school, and of a few recent writers a part of whose work has appeared in French or English, like Kovalevsky; but who of us know anything about the sociological theories of Lavrov, of Mikhalovsky, and of Kareyev? Yet these three are the truly eminent and representative names in Russian sociology, standing as they do for the more liberal progressive tendencies in their national life.

Dr. Hecker has performed a valuable service in making the sociological ideas and systems of these men accessible to us in English. His work seems to be very carefully done. He first discusses the social and political background of Russian sociology. Then he takes up successively the different schools of sociological thought in Russia, carefully presenting the methodological traits and essential theories of each, comparing and clearly differentiating them. The book is well worth reading, not only because it presents in clear outlines the social, political, and economic theories of different elements in the Russian nation; but also because it illustrates the difficulties and futilities which have beset sociological thought in Russia, as well as elsewhere, when it has not been developed upon a secure basis of established scientific truth.